THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The public expenditure on education & health as a proportion of GDP in 2005-06 are 3.66% and 1.31%, respectively.

(c) Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) and National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) are two flagship programmes aimed at increasing access to education and health, respectively. SSA aims at increasing access to education through providing school infrastructure, additional teachers and other facilities. ,About 98% of rural population has access to primary and about 86% to upper primary schooling facilities. NRHM seeks to provide effective healthcare to rural population throughout the country with special focus on 18 States, which have weak public health indicators and/or weak infrastructure.

Roadmap drawn by oversight Committee

2553. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA:
SHRIMATI MOHSINA KIDWAI:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Planning Commission are aware of the roadmap drawn by the Oversight Committee, wherein they have projected an expenditure of Rs.72,202 crore in the Eleventh Five Year Plan to implement 27 per cent OBC quota;

(b) if so, whether the views of IITs, IIMs and Central Universities are known to the Planning Commission that the funds projection by the Oversight Committee is inadequate; and

(c) what methodology the Planning Commission would adopt so that Government achieves its declared targets?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN): (a) The Oversight Committee's projected expenditure for implementation of 27% OBC reservation for the Eleventh Plan is Rs. 17,270 crores.

(b) and (c) Five subject specific Groups dealing with different disciplines were constituted to provide inputs to the Oversight Committee. The Group's Reports which included financial requirements were taken into account by the Oversight Committee in recommending adequate funds for implementation in a phased manner. The Oversight Committee has recommended setting up of an Empowered Committee in each of the institutions and at the Ministry level and also an Inter-Ministerial Monitoring Committee to monitor and review implementation of OBC reservations.

Reviewing of method for poverty estimation

2554. SHRl SK. KHABIR UDDIN AHMED: Will the PRlME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Planning Commission has decided to review the current method of poverty estimation; and

(b) if so, the progress made so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRl M.V. RAJASEKHARAN): (a) and (b) No, Sir. No decision has been taken by the Planning Commission, at present, to review the current method of poverty estimation. However, the Planning Commission has constituted an Expert Group in December, 2005 under the Chairmanship of Professor Suresh D. Tendulkar to review the methodology for estimation of poverty. The Expert Group has not yet submitted its report.

Annual Plan for Uttarakhand

†2555. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the percentage of increase recommended/approved in the annual plan of Uttarakhand State during the year 2006-07 in comparison to the last year and the percentage of increase recommended/approved by the Planning Commission in the annual plan of the year 2007-08 in comparison to the last year; and

(b) the reasons for low increase in the annual plan of the present planning year as compared to the last year's plan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN): (a) and (b) The percentage increase in the Annual Plan approved by Planning Commission for the year 2006-07 in comparison to the previous year was 48.15% and in the Annual Plan 2007-08 it was 9.47%. The agreed plan size is finalized in consultation with the State Government on the basis of resource projection by the State, availability of the resources and overall debt ceiling of the State.

Declaration of backward districts

2556. SHRI O.T. LEPCHA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the details of districts in the country declared by Government as backward districts as on date;

(b) whether Government have formulated any national policy in this respect; and

(c) if so, the details thereof indicating the number of poor families residing in these districts?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN): (a) The list of 250 districts identified for coverage under the Backward Regions Grant Fund (BRGF), set up in 2006-07, is enclosed as Statement (*See* below).

(b) No, Sir. However, as stated in reply to part (a) of the question above, the Government set up the Backward Regions Grant Fund in 2006-07 to redress regional imbalances in development. The fund will provide financial resources for supplementing and converging existing developmental inflows into the identified districts through Panchayati Raj Institutions.

(c) Does not arise.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.